

October 30, 2007

STATEMENT OF GOVERNOR HALEY BARBOUR
ON THE EXECUTION OF EARL WESLEY BERRY

Justice has finally been rendered in this terrible crime. The real tragedy in this case is that justice was delayed for more than two decades. My thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends of Mary Bounds, the innocent victim whose life was taken by Earl Wesley Berry.

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ON THE SUPREME COURT'S DECISION IN THE EARL WESLEY
BERRY CASE

I am disappointed in the Supreme Court's ruling. The real tragedy in this case is that the life of an innocent woman, Mary Bounds of Houston, Mississippi, was taken nearly 20 years ago and justice has been delayed. My thoughts and prayers continue to be with her family and friends.

I hope the Court will lift its stay as soon as possible so that justice may be served by Earl Wesley Berry's execution for this heinous crime.

AND/OR

The death penalty is an essential element of Mississippi's criminal justice system, yet justice in this case has been delayed for so long that the deterrent effect of the death penalty has been greatly reduced. Currently, Mississippi law provides that the death sentence be imposed by lethal injection.

Given the Supreme Court's ruling today, I have asked the Attorney General and Commissioner Chris Epps of the Department of Corrections to consider and report back to me their recommendations as to how Mississippi could change its method of administering lethal injection in a manner that is fully consistent with current U.S. Supreme Court precedent.

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